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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the training of partners for the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). The three projects cited include Project Learning Tree (PLT), Project WILD, and Project WET. The main purpose of the training projects was to increase the number of individuals trained in environmental education programs. There are five themes in the training projects: (1) Joint Training Projects; (2) Educator Training Projects; (3) Facilitator Training Projects; (4) Extended Training Projects; and (5) Special Training Projects or Efforts. The reported projects were varied, challenging, and provided the basis for many activities that are continuing in various states. This report is not meant to provide a "how-to" guide for projects initiated or supported by EETAP funds, but rather present a qualitative look at the impact these monies have had on the practice of training for environmental education. (YDS)

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1995 - 2000

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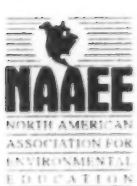

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Lessons Learned about Educator Training was researched and written by Dr. Joe E. Heimlich, Associate Professor at the Ohio State University. The study was developed as a project of the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). It was funded under agreement NT-902897-01-05 between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Education and the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE).

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About NAAEE

The North American Association for Environmental Education is a network of professionals and students working in the field of environmental education (EE) throughout North America and in over 55 countries around the world. Since 1971, NAAEE has promoted EE and supported the work of education professionals.

There are many environmental interest groups and many organizations dedicated to improving education. NAAEE integrates these perspectives and takes a positive, cooperative approach to promoting education about environmental issues. NAAEE members believe education must go beyond consciousness-raising and prepare people to think about the difficult decisions they have to make regarding environmental stewardship, and to work together to solve environmental problems. The Association recognizes the need for a coherent body of information about environmental issues, but knows that information and analysis are only part of an effective education program. To be truly effective, this body of knowledge must be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum and into all types of educating institutions for the widest array of audiences.

In order to provide tangible support for EE and education professionals, NAAEE engages in a variety of programs and activities: an annual conference at varying North American sites; an active publications program; the Affiliates Partnership, and EETAP. For more information on NAAEE membership and activities, please contact:

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About EETAP

The Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) is a consortium of leading education organizations working to provide support and training to strengthen environmental education (EE) nationally. The partnership strives to create synergy for EE — making impacts for sustainable programs that are greater than would be possible by organizations working in isolation.

EETAP partners sponsor teacher training workshops, develop and disseminate educational materials, link existing materials to state and national learning standards, and facilitate dialogue with diverse stakeholders interested in improving America's environmental literacy. In October 2000, the University of

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Methodology 3

Training Projects 5
- Lessons Learned 7

Traditionally Underserved Audiences 11
- Lessons Learned 12

Education Reform 15
- Lessons Learned 16

Partnerships 17
- Partnerships as a Focus of the Projects 17
- Partnerships as a Means for the Projects 18
- Lessons Learned 20

Reaching Teachers 23
- Lessons Learned 24

Leveraging Funds 27
- Lessons Learned 28

Conclusion: Overall Observations 29

Introduction

In 1995, the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) formed the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) as a consortium of leading EE organizations and educational institutions. With funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Education, EETAP's member organizations work together to improve and expand existing quality EE training efforts. The partners in EETAP include the Greater Washington Urban League; the National Environmental Education Advancement Project/University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point; NAAEE's Urban Leadership Collaboratives, Affiliates Partnership, and EE-Link; Northern Illinois University; The Ohio State University; Project del Rio; and WestEd/EdGateway. Three national networks, Project WILD, Project Learning Tree, and Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), were also members of the consortium. (For information on EETAP and its partners, see www.eetap.org.)

These three networks conduct professional development for educators and other education professionals organized at the state level by state coordinators. The coordinators manage statewide networks of volunteer "facilitators" who are trained to conduct the six-hour workshops for educators that then certify the educator in the use of the national materials for that program. The state coordinators, usually within a state agency, build and rely on partnerships of state agencies, educational organizations, and state/local funding to implement their training efforts. The materials used for each of the programs, centered around comprehensive activity guides for educators, are developed by national offices, which are also responsible for developing training programs, coordinating the national program efforts, supporting professional development of the coordinators, and other efforts that cross state lines.

Project Learning Tree (PLT) is an award-winning, interdisciplinary environmental education program for educators working with students in Pre-K through grade 12. PLT helps students gain awareness and knowledge of the natural and human-built environment, their place within it, as well as their responsibility for it. PLT uses forests, woodlands, trees, and other plants as the entry point for its activities. (For information on PLT, see www.plt.org.)

Project WILD is one of the most widely used conservation and environmental education programs among educators of students in kindergarten through high school. Project WILD is based upon the premise that young people and educators have a vital interest in learning about our natural world and it approaches this interest through an emphasis on wildlife. Project WILD addresses the need for human beings to develop as responsible citizens of our planet. (For information on Project WILD, see www.projectwild.org.)

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) has as its goal to facilitate and promote awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources through the development and dissemination of classroom-ready teaching aids and through the establishment of state and internationally sponsored programs. (For information on Project WET, see www.montana.edu/wwwwet.)

During the course of its five-year existence, the Environmental Education and Training Partnership had a significant focus on funding pass-through grants to these three national training partners. In this five-year period, pass-through funds totaling $1,184,390 were made by the three national partners with $410,990 from PLT; $358,900 from WILD; and $414,500 from WET. More than 300 training grants were made to 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories by these training partners. In all, more than 2,750 facilitators and 35,000 educators were trained using the EETAP funds.

These pass-through grants, which will be referred to as "projects" throughout this document, were made by each of the training partners to state coordinators who proposed specific activities to be used for each of the project years. These projects varied in scope, amounts of monies granted, and focus, though they were all based on goals and objectives of EETAP. This report is a synthesis of the activities of the projects funded as pass-through grants. It is the hope of the EETAP partners that such a synthesis of projects will assist others in environmental education in generating ideas for activities, build on efforts that were begun using these pass-through monies, and provide "lessons learned" for the field of environmental education.

The projects reported were varied, challenging, and provided the basis for many activities that are continuing in various states. This report is not meant to provide a "how-to" guide for projects initiated or supported by EETAP funds, but rather a qualitative look at the impact these monies have had on the practice of training for environmental education.

Methodology

The training partners for the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) had a major portion of their funding used as "pass-through" grants to state coordinators for their programs. The annual reports made by the states receiving these grants were collected by the national program offices and summarized in their annual reports on the project to the funder.

The three network training partners, Project Learning Tree, Project WILD, and Project WET, collected the reports from the state coordinators. We reviewed the reports using a developmental theme process and a modified content analysis matrix. Because of inconsistencies in the reports and reporting structures, the content analysis matrix was reduced to a thematic structure and frequency counts were not made, although recurrent themes were noted for all reports.

The reports from the state coordinators were primarily single-page documents that identified achievements using the pass-through funds, achievements above and beyond the grant, problems encountered, and plans for the future.

There were numerous projects that fit into several of the themes of this synthesis. Because there are no "counts" of projects, that duplication is not explicitly noted, but the reader will find descriptions of certain projects in more than one thematic area. Because some of the coordinators reported on "projects" and some on "programs" in their reports, there is no differentiation made in the analysis. In this report, "program" is used to refer to the national effort, the larger state training program, or specific deliverables of workshops/meetings, while "project" is used to refer specifically to the funded activities.

Each training network's reports was reviewed separately, and then the thematic observations were put together. Where appropriate, some quotations have been taken from the reports for clarification of the findings. Throughout, specific references to states or projects have been eliminated to focus squarely on the overall impact of the projects.

Training Projects

Because the primary purpose of the pass-through grants was to increase the numbers of individuals trained in exemplary environmental education programs, the projects undertaken by the states did, indeed, reflect the goal of training. Yet there were differences in how the training projects were conducted among the funded projects and in the ways the monies through EETAP were used to reach the broad goal of "training."

The three EETAP training partners have state-based networks of educators who are trained as "facilitators" of their programs. These facilitators volunteer to conduct training programs for other educators in the use of the materials/ projects. Following the six-hour training, educators are considered "certified" in the program(s) in which they were trained and then become part of the larger statewide network of project educators.

Five themes related to the training projects emerged during the review. The first is that of joint or combined training projects. The second and third themes revolve around educator or teacher training as the focus versus facilitator training as the focus. The fourth theme closely ties with another large theme of the projects, that of partnerships in extended training projects. The final theme is that of special training projects or efforts.

Joint Training Projects

Many of the funded projects supported joint training projects among PLT, WILD, and WET. In addition, joint training projects were offered with Aquatic WILD, GREEN, Adopt-A-Lake, Wonders of Wetlands, and other such projects. Configurations of joint projects varied, but there was a strong focus on the three training partners offering combined facilitator and educator workshops in many states throughout the grant periods. The primary focus of most of these training projects was facilitator training to allow facilitators to teach two or all three of the projects in their educator workshops.

Some of the projects used the funds from their grants to conduct retreats or camps for facilitators. Often, these events tried to tie both active and inactive facilitators into the project as well as train new facilitators. The extended times at the camps were often used for joint training efforts.

Educator Training Projects

There was a focus in many states on educator training projects. These efforts often were oriented toward reaching specific, and, in many cases, new audiences.

There were some projects that had *students* as the focus of the training effort. These training efforts were usually to train high school or middle school students to work with elementary students on lessons related to the topics of the national program. One project trained high schoolers to present multiple units from the program materials. Another project trained high school students to become "mentors" to students in an elementary school in an inner-city neighborhood. High schoolers were trained in one project to conduct projects for elementary students, and then teach the students to conduct backyard habitat surveys. Upon completion of the surveys, the elementary students visited the city zoo where the high school students again worked with them. Yet another project focused on a camp for high school students with a strong emphasis on taking action in the community.

Some interesting variations on the use of funds included one project that featured "pass-through monies" from grants to schools that were certified in the project to enhance efforts. Several states used resources to provide training projects to schools' entire faculties, rather than a few teachers.

Facilitator Training Projects

In several of the grants each year, states chose to provide facilitator training using grant funds. Often, these training projects were considered "advanced" in that they were more content-focused than time allows in the traditional facilitator training. Other projects determined that working specifically with facilitators on topics such as introducing the current facilitators to new resources would be most effective for ultimately reaching the desired audiences. (Example: High school modules that are topically focused units for high schools supplement the core program materials; Spanish translations; correlations.)

One approach taken by some coordinators was to develop mentoring projects in which experienced facilitators would mentor a new facilitator for a year, through their first training project, or through a certain number of training efforts. In one state, funds were used to allow experienced facilitators to travel to remote areas to work one-on-one with new facilitators.

Extended Training Projects

Many states used resources from their grants to help support extended training projects for facilitators, educators, and students. Many of these projects had "themes" that held the extended time (usually one week) together and operated under a larger environmental education training umbrella. (These types of projects are discussed in greater detail in other sections of the report.)

Special Training Projects or Efforts

For the first few years of EETAP, there was a major focus among the training partners' state coordinators to conduct projects that focused on action projects or community service efforts. This resulted in a wide variety of projects including biome murals, community gardens, revegetated streambanks, and trees to replace a parking lot. One coordinator noted that following the grant cycle, the action component was strong enough that it would be a component in all training projects in the future.

Other efforts included mentoring training projects and focusing in workshops on including career education in the delivery of the programs to youth. Some workshops focused specifically on non-science teachers and on training projects tying the project to science proficiencies.

Several coordinators had projects in which they collaborated with the State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER).

Lessons Learned

- ***Timing:*** Timing of training projects for teachers was a major issue among coordinators. There were many comments regarding more appropriate times for teacher training, but no consensus emerged in the comments. It appears that there is not one "best time" for teacher training. Some coordinators suggested that summer works best for their teachers, and others noted late autumn or early spring as preferred times for the workshops. A fairly uniform comment was offered by many coordinators noting that the time required for promotion and implementation of the teacher training projects is a longer process and has a cycle that doesn't naturally fit with the grant cycle.

- ***Spring promotions:*** There were several coordinators who noted that teacher workshops during the summer appear to work best for them, but that the promotion of the workshops *must* occur early in the spring, because teachers' plans for the summer are often set by the end of April.

- ***College credit:*** Some of the coordinators who offered summer workshops for teachers noted that the strongest attraction for teachers to participate appeared to be offering college credit through a university.

- ***Stipends:*** Competition for teachers' time for training projects is strong. In a few cases, coordinators observed that the workshops that offered higher "stipends" for the teachers to attend received greater response. Most of these higher stipend projects were funded by major state and national grants.

- ***Education reform:*** There are always competing issues for teachers' attention, and some of the issues inevitably are political in nature. The focus on education reform, standards, and proficiencies that occurred during the EETAP project drew the attention of formal educators. The workshops that appeared to be most successful in drawing teachers were those including components that addressed the political demands on the education system.

- ***Attrition:*** Providing training programs for agencies appeared to be the only type of training project that did not see a large decay in numbers registered versus numbers attending. Overall, the training projects that seem to have the least attrition are those that have support from educators' supervisors, whether school (principal, district) or nonformal ("boss").

- ***Nonformal links:*** Many of the coordinators working on training for nonformal educators commented on the need to create linkages with the nonformal organizations, whether it was through correlating the activities with the nonformal's projects, or establishing individual connections with the nonformal organization. The desire to satisfy the needs of the nonformal demands the training project work with each specific nonformal organization to ensure that goals of both organizations are met.

- ***Extended programs:*** Although time and resource intensive, the extended training programs appear to have great value for the workshop participants. An additional benefit for many of the coordinators was that because the extended programs required the expertise of other individuals and organizations/agencies, partnerships for future efforts emerged.

- ***"Free" training:*** EETAP funds were used in many cases to supplement or supplant the costs of training programs, often to the elimination of fees for participants. A couple of coordinators wondered if the "free" aspect of some training programs psychologically reduced the value of the training in the minds of individuals who had registered, but failed to show.

- ***Combined training:*** Combined training projects seem to be effective in several ways. One benefit noted by several coordinators is that such combined training provides a type of cross-fertilization in their facilitators. Another coordinator noted that the combined training was valuable "to honor volunteers' time."

- ***Added elements:*** During the course of the projects, several states added new elements to their training programs to address specific audiences' needs, such as correlations with standards, action projects, and similar components. Many noted that the already-full schedule of training was constrained by this effort; as one coordinator wrote: "adding components to existing training is tough."

- ***Mentoring:*** Mentoring projects had mixed results. One coordinator commented "the mentoring program takes a lot of time and resources with relatively few benefits." Another, however, noted that the mentoring project "was invaluable for new facilitators." There seems to be a variety of ways of establishing mentoring projects, and both the structure and the commitment of the coordinator for the management of the effort appear to influence the outcome.

Traditionally Underserved Audiences

Over the life of the EETAP partnership, one of the priority themes has been increasing diversity within the field of environmental education. To this end, many of the pass-through grants to the state coordinators focused on attempting to reach the traditionally hard-to-reach or nontraditional audiences for the training partners. The strategies for reaching these audiences reflect the other large themes that emerged in this review. What is perhaps most surprising is the diversity of audiences identified by the state projects as traditionally underserved. What is, for one state, a "nontraditional" audience is routine for another. Geographic factors, including human geography, seem to play a major role in defining what groups are "underserved" or "hard-to-reach."

For example, in many of the western states, the characteristic of rural, or as some of the state coordinators noted, extremely remote has historically been a deterrent to access of the training projects. In other states, inner-city audiences have been hard to reach. There was similarly no consistency in the types of audiences targeted in that the dominant groups of hard-to-reach or traditionally underserved vary geographically as well.

For ***Hispanic*** audiences, many of the projects focused on training in and on Spanish versions and translations of the project materials. Other efforts focused on this audience included bi-lingual training projects, working with a state association for bi-lingual education, creating a partnership with the Migrant Student Education Coordinator for a district, and specifically supporting efforts in schools that, by nature of the population, must include bi-lingual education.

Native American populations were also a focus of special training efforts. Some of these efforts were focused on reservation-based, or reservation-specific training projects working with the reservation school staffs. Others were regional training projects that sought to serve multiple nations. Several of these projects involved building partnerships with the nations.

Primarily in the western states, ***rural/remote*** locations were identified as a population traditionally underserved. In these projects, funds were often used for travel-related expenses. Either funds were provided to help defray educators' costs when attending a training, or to pay for travel, lodging, and meals of facilitators or state coordinators. As an example, one coordinator reported that to conduct a one-day, six-hour training, it required the training team to travel a full day in each direction, making the one-day workshop a three-day effort, one for which there is no money in the normal project budget.

Another focus for many state projects was that of ***inner-city, predominately African-American or Black*** schools and community groups. Several of the projects focusing on these groups developed projects that focused specifically on a school and included things such as whole-school training for teachers, school mentoring projects, or special project funds for undertaking service projects around the school. Other efforts worked with school districts, or more specifically, offices within school districts such as science education, district support services offices, regional service centers, and others to offer training and support projects for teachers. Nonformal groups, such as garden clubs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and scouting groups, including an in-school scouting project, were also used to reach some of these audiences.

An alternative manner of identifying some of the underserved groups is looking at the groups' access to resources. Many of the coordinators' comments noted the lack of fiscal and physical resources for many of the projects that had a large focus on a minority population. Some of the coordinators did note that the monies from the training grants allowed them access to some of the poorer groups that could not otherwise afford the training, even at $15.00 per teacher.

There were also projects that targeted audiences of groups such as ***Pacific Islanders***, ***Huong***, ***Asians***, and ***Asian-Americans***. For some coordinators, working with ***volunteer groups*** proved to be a new audience.

Lessons Learned

- ***Time:*** Time is a major factor in working with any new group. When that group has characteristics that tend to unite them and separate the provider of a program, the time needed to build connections into the community is of tremendous importance. Individuals developing such relationships must give themselves time and not try to rush the process. After several years of funding for development of a program, one coordinator noted "I have started to feel a sense of accomplishment, although there is still much to do; this has replaced former feelings of despair and frustration."

- ***Partnerships:*** Several reports from coordinators noted the importance of using existing groups within a target population to reach that population. Working with a group that has credibility with the target population, often relating to prior experience and time spent with the target population, lends credibility to the training program and ensures that it meets the needs of and is sensitive to the target audience.

- ***Existing opportunities:*** Similarly, many coordinators were able to reach many individuals who might be otherwise difficult to connect with through existing conferences and meetings of associations, organizations, and coalitions. Displays and workshops at meetings and conferences seem to be a useful tool for gaining initial access to groups.

- ***Building bridges:*** Continually, coordinators noted that "building bridges," or creating meaningful relationships, with nontraditional audiences is vital to gaining access to those audiences. Building bridges does, however, take time and focus on the part of the coordinators if the relationship is to be solid and continuing with the state project. One coordinator commented that "to work with special segments of the population, it is important to bring them into the planning process from the very beginning."

- ***Ends versus means:*** Some reports lamented that the composition of the educators trained did not meet their own goals for diversity in their training. Many of these same coordinators noted, however, that the students or youth reached by these educators in many cases were primarily members of the target audiences. As examples: in one workshop, 77% of the participants were of Caucasian/European descent, but 33% of the students were African-American, 38% Hispanic, and 11% Asian. In another, with 75% of the educators being of dominant cultural descent, their students were 50% Hispanic and 15% Asian. If the goal of our projects is to reach the broad U.S. population, and the goal of the training partner programs is reaching teachers and educators who work with students, the outcome of the *students* reached may be secondary to the training project, but certainly is an important measure of reaching the goal of diversity in environmental education projects.

- ***Theoretical base:*** Some of the coordinators noted the long-term value of grounding their facilitator training more explicitly in the disciplines that inform their efforts, especially as it relates to working with specific, culturally diverse audiences. There is a body of theory and practice for working with different groups, whether a cultural group or a bi-lingual group, and it is valuable to "expose facilitators to theory and practice . . . in order to empower them" in their work.

Education Reform

One of the dominant themes throughout the EETAP project was that of integrating environmental education into the education reform movement. The EETAP training partners, in conjunction with the EETAP partners of WestEd and NEEAP, played an important role in the delivery of activity on education reform at the local level. Many of the coordinators reported value in their collaborative efforts with, and support from, other EETAP partners, and especially the services and expertise offered by WestEd and NEEAP.

Correlations with Standards

The movement of education reform has had a strong orientation toward testing of students against standards or proficiencies. The national teacher associations and disciplinary-based groups have developed standards for their fields. Most states, either concurrently or subsequently, have written or rewritten standards for student knowledge according to the states' courses of study.

Most of the EETAP pass-through grants had, at some level, activity related to standards and correlating the projects to the states' standards. The most dominant discipline to which standards were correlated was science. Other projects sought to create correlations with mathematics, social studies, geography, language arts, and in one case, performing arts.

The correlations with formal education standards ranged from K-8, 9-12, pre-K, and K-12. In most cases, the correlations were done using funds from the grants to bring together educators familiar with both the standards and with the project materials. Matrix correlations were made and then training conducted in using the correlations.

Several coordinators developed projects to incorporate the training activities into state assessment and performance assessments into guidelines, examples for teachers, or state projects relating to state education standards. The nature of the activities in the national projects lent themselves well to creating student mastery performance assessments. In other states, the projects were

incorporated into assessment rubrics on benchmarks to science, geography, social studies, and mathematics.

There were also some correlations made with some nonformal education programs. Most common was the correlation of the programs with requirements from Girl Scout councils for either merit badges, or new merit badge programs. One coordinator worked with Extension in that state to correlate the program with a widely used curricular piece on life skills offered through 4-H (a national program through Extension).

Environment as an Integrating Theme

For more than 30 years, environmental education has promoted itself as a powerful tool for integrating learning across disciplines. The work of the State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER) is dedicated in part to the promotion of use of the Environment as an Integrating Context (EIC).

Within the EETAP training partners, many state coordinators worked with SEER to offer joint training projects, support services, and other activities as a tool for improving the use of environmental education in formal education.

In addition, the training partners all worked with WestEd and EE-Link to provide training for coordinators and support services for web-based activity at the state level.

Lessons Learned

- ***Design:*** The ability to relate the existing materials to changes in, or clarification of, state educational standards demonstrates the conceptual rigor and soundness of PLT, WILD, and WET.

- ***Jargon:*** To effectively work with formal education, it is vital that environmental education organizations and projects "speak the language of" the formal educational system. Inclusion of EE into schools is dependent upon the materials and programs fitting the needs, goals, structure, and organization of the schools. Conveying the fit to classroom teachers requires using the language the teachers know and use.

Partnerships

Many of the projects funded through EETAP relied on partnerships, either as a focus of the grant activity, or as a means of obtaining the goals of the project. The partnerships were of a wide variety of structures and relationships.

Partnerships as a Focus of the Projects

There were numerous projects using EETAP funding in which a dominant focus of the funded activities was establishing relationships with organizations, agencies, communities, or individuals with access to audiences or resources. There were several different foci of the partnerships. Some of these partnerships were constructed to access future audiences for the training partners' programs. Another trend was the development of partnerships that were created specifically to conduct a particular project or implement a one-time event. The third dominant trend was the creation of partnerships that could be viewed as "bridge building" and were undertaken to create sustainable efforts that had mutual benefit to the partners. Each of these themes is explored briefly below.

Establish Partnerships to Develop Future Audiences

Some of the projects undertaken included developmental time spent in courting partnerships with already existing, or intact, groups that serve desired target audiences. The goal from the perspective of the coordinators is having a long-term impact for the project by using the intact groups' audiences. Samples of some of the organizations with which partnerships were created include ***Girl Scouts*** (and the development of a merit badge using the training partner's materials through camps); ***Cub Scouts; 4-H; zoos; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Campfire Boys and Girls; and Boys and Girls Clubs.***

Other partnerships were created to reach audiences that are not traditionally served groups. This included working with ***inner-city schools and school districts; model schools projects; tribal councils and reservations; State Departments of Children, Families, and Learning; Americorps; Headstart; and Minority Student Education Coordinators.*** As with the partnerships above, the goal in these projects was

to create relationships in which the training partners' programs would be incorporated into the ongoing service of these other groups. There was a difference, however, with these projects in that these partnerships were created primarily for the training partner to gain access to the audience(s) of the existing group. The benefits to the training partners was access to a non-traditional (for them) audience. The benefit for the new partner was the access to the resources and projects of the training partner.

Establish Partnerships to Identify Potential Projects

An interesting twist on the development of future audiences, was the focus on partnerships that were created to explore ways the state coordinators could develop projects to reach a different audience by collaborating with, or becoming a more equal partner (as opposed to a provider of program) with other organizations. Examples of this type of partnership include: ***state bi-lingual association; state agencies;*** and ***school districts*** in which the coordinator worked with the partner(s) to identify ways in which they could collaborate before identifying a specific activity for the partnership.

Establish Partnerships for Long-term Linkages or Sustainability

Many partnerships were created using resources from the pass-through funds that were "slow building" but very important in terms of creating long-term efforts of mutual benefit. These types of partnerships include relationships with ***regional education centers, school districts, statewide EE organizations, industries, agencies, and non-profit organizations.*** The focus of these partnerships was not the implementation of a workshop, event, or program, but rather to create linkages that would encourage and facilitate future collaborative efforts. The reports revealed a frustration in many of the grant recipients that efforts were moving more slowly than they had anticipated, but that the groundwork being laid appeared to be valuable. As one coordinator observed, "building a relationship between the two organizations is important to strengthening both programs."

Partnerships as a Means for the Projects

In many of the funded projects, it was necessary for the coordinator to establish relationships with other individuals, organizations, or institutions to effectively achieve the goals of the project. Some of these partnerships overlap with other foci of the report such as diversity focus, education reform, and pre-service educational efforts.

Several projects created partnerships with ***community colleges, colleges and universities, and historically black institutions*** in an effort to reach pre-service teacher projects. In some of the projects, the training partners

conducted classes or workshops for the institution. In others, the training partner worked with the institution to offer summer workshops for in-service and pre-service teachers (for credit). And in still others, the training partner worked with the faculty of the institution to train the faculty members in their project to facilitate the incorporation of the project(s) into their methods courses or other courses. In one state, such a partnership was created with the Department of Corrections, Detention Education in which the educators at the facility were trained to incorporate EE into their programs at the institution. Overall, the purpose of these partnerships was not the partnership with the institution; reaching the pre-service educators was the goal.

Several projects focused on creating partnerships for specific activities with the partnership being an important tool for achieving the goals of the activity. These included partnerships with ***historical societies, National Park Service, NASA, state parks, and various state agencies.*** Within this type of partnership was a wide variety of exciting, innovative projects:

- week-long EE camps for middle and/or high school students during the summer
- an "electronic field trip" project that focused on unique natural sites within the state using the Internet, with real-time programs and actual data used during the "trip"
- several regional projects for teachers that matched the location, history of the state/region, cultural, social, economic, and environmental connections of the area using historians, environmental scientists, cultural anthropologists, various experts, and folklorists

A Listing of Some of the Partnerships

One coordinator stated "we need to partner more with other programs to provide the materials and enhancement skills needed by our youth." Another observed that "teachers have many opportunities for training." Considering this, coordinators established many partnerships with nonformal organizations, depending on their projects' needs. The diversity in state programs is reflected in a list of the many different types of groups with which the states partnered:

Resource Conservation Districts
Department of Children, Families and Learning
National Park Service
Department of Corrections
Historically Black Institutions
Historical Societies
Americorps
U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Local Artisans
School Districts
School Buildings
Universities
Community Colleges
Girl Scouts of America

Boy Scouts of America
Headstart
Departments of Natural Resources/Environment
Statewide EE organizations
Departments of Health
Soil & Water Conservation Districts
State Agency experts (geologists, historians)
Adopt-A-Lake, GREEN, other EE programs
Environmental Education Centers
Garden Clubs
Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Extension and 4-H
U.S. Forest Service
Industries
Churches
State Parks
Garden Clubs
Aquaria
Zoos

Lessons Learned

"Partnering is what makes these [workshops] successful"
– from a State Coordinator's Report

Many of the comments offered in the reports provided ideas that could facilitate developing partnerships. Some of the advice drawn from the projects includes:

- ***Mutual benefits:*** When working with a group comprised of, or that has historically worked with, a new audience for the project, it is important to offer something to that group. The value of the program — as known by those who use it — may or may not "sell" the program to the new partner unless there is obvious value to both the group and its constituencies. One coordinator expressed why it is important to "incorporate, integrate, and articulate the objectives of both partners up front to avoid later dissension." Several coordinators noted that the partnerships had to satisfy inherent needs of all the organizations/partners involved.

- ***Create access:*** Go to where the groups are; don't expect others to come to you. This applies to both training efforts as well as meetings.

- ***Intact groups:*** It is helpful to work with already-existing groups to create a partner that exists in the community of the new audience. This is especially valuable to have long-term partnerships.

- ***Personal relationships:*** The use of a person-to-person "sales" technique is of great value when building relationships. Knowing people and having them know you adds to the strength of the relationship. On the other hand, some of the coordinators noted that too much reliance on an individual contact within an organization can be problematic when there is illness or someone leaves a position. It is good to have the relationship with the organization or group as well as with an individual.

- ***Volunteer roles:*** An interesting observation offered by a couple of coordinators was that when partnering with groups that rely on volunteers, it is important to remember that the volunteers often have multiple roles (jobs, other memberships or volunteer roles) and the contact may have a wider benefit. Likewise, the multiple roles may offer additional challenges to the training effort.

- ***Time:*** One of the concerns repeatedly mentioned in the reports was that of the unanticipated amount of time required to build partnerships. As one report noted, building bridges takes time: "at least one year planning horizon for this type of project" should be expected before action or products of the partnership can be expected to be seen. Similarly, several of the state coordinators offered comments to the effect that "intent and commitment to working with nontraditional audience pays off over time by increasing linkages and bridges into new and other efforts." These grant recipients noted both the challenges of partnerships while building them, and the power of real partnerships when the programs or efforts of the partnership are revealed.

Reaching Teachers

As the purpose of the training grants was to ultimately extend the access of these environmental education resources to teachers, and to increase the numbers of teachers trained in the three projects, most of the efforts undertaken by the state coordinators focused on formal classroom teachers. There were also many efforts that included, and in some cases specifically targeted, nonformal educators. In many states, projects focused on reaching pre-service educators.

Formal In-Service Educators

As noted under the section on training projects, there were many different ways in which projects attempted to directly reach classroom teachers. Resources were provided by coordinators to reduce costs of workshops, to take training projects to rural/remote areas, to provide incentives for the teachers, and to focus on specific audiences for the training efforts. Some states attempted to use "whole-school" training projects with schools in targeted communities while other states attempted to reach more teachers by using district-wide support centers, science coordinators, resource units, and similar structures. According to one coordinator, "it is easier to focus and use the site" with whole school in-services at the school itself.

Nonformal In-Service Educators

Other states chose to try to integrate or feature training projects targeted toward nonformal educators. Many of these educators belong to the organizations with which the states were building partnerships. Girl Scout, Boy Scout, 4-H, and other youth group leaders, including church groups and civic groups, were targeted for training to reach youth audiences as "captured audiences" in places other than the formal school setting.

Pre-Service Educators

Many in the field of environmental education are calling for an increased effort to incorporate EE into pre-service teacher training and certification projects. The

pass-through grants used two approaches to reaching these future classroom-educators: direct provision of training, and training of the professors in the institutions.

Direct Provision

There were numerous funded activities in all three training programs that were based on having facilitators or coordinators work with universities to provide training projects for existing teacher-education classes. Many of the training projects were incorporated into methods classes. Some were six-hour workshops offered for credit; more were six contact hours with classes; and the majority were one or two sessions to introduce the students to the materials and the activities included in the resources.

Training of Professors

Several coordinators worked with universities to train faculty in the materials. There were examples where faculty members who were already facilitators in the projects were contacted to encourage and support (e.g., through materials at no cost to the student or the university) incorporation of the project(s) into their syllabi. In other cases, faculty members were invited to special facilitator training projects and then tracked regarding their use of the materials in their classes. A few coordinators trained the faculty for certification in the project and then encouraged use of the materials in their classes. As one coordinator noted: we are "doing a better job at reaching pre-service students since we trained the professors."

Lessons Learned

- ***Time:*** Time was a dominant challenge for the coordinators. The difficulty in reaching in-service teachers demands time spent in promotion, marketing, registration, and delivery as well as follow-up. Attempting to reach nontraditional audiences through in-service teachers means working with teachers who not only have full schedules and often are under tremendous pressure to perform at high levels in challenging situations, but are also pressured by many other groups and organizations for access to their students.

- ***Expectations:*** Many coordinators commented that they had high expectations for teacher training regarding both the numbers of training projects and the numbers of teachers participating in the projects. As a result of these big, optimistic expectations, there were many reports of not meeting their previously set expectations. In the world of grants, coordinators may feel a need to reach large numbers so they can justify the awarding of the monies. Realistic projections with explanations of

value of those contacts may be both more achievable and more valuable in the long term.

- ***Alternative mechanisms:*** The opportunities to reach students through mechanisms other than in-service teacher training projects are potentially vast. The variety of partners and projects generated by the coordinators demonstrates the power of reaching learners via nonformal education systems. The ability to reach *these* educators, however, requires a different approach: being a partner rather than a service-provider.

- ***Faculty as facilitators:*** Using university faculty as facilitators to reach their classes of future teachers appears to be a viable and effective tool to deliver environmental education training. The challenge of this approach is in tracking how training is used once teachers start working in schools.

Leveraging Funds

A final theme that emerged from the analysis was that of using the funds provided by the pass-through grants to garner additional resources for the state programs. There were several ways in which this securing of additional funding was accomplished.

In several states, the funds from EETAP were used as **seed money** to help build a program, relationship, or activity. As one coordinator noted, grant money that can be used in this manner can "lead to long-term monetary support" for the project from other sources. In many cases, projects started under EETAP secured funding for continued efforts from agencies or other grant sources.

Several coordinators used the funds they received as **matching funds** for grant proposals to non-federal sources. Matching funds are often required by granting organizations to receive funds. Some agencies cannot or do not allow release time to be applied against a match; some granting organizations likewise require actual cash matches as opposed to in-kind or release time monies. In these cases, the ability to use the EETAP funds as matches made a tremendous difference in the ability to obtain funding for larger program efforts.

Several coordinators explained that their grants were used to extend the usual work of the program, but that there was a much greater margin of benefit by **adding onto existing budgets** than in the base budget. Because many of the activities of the coordinators and, in some cases, the facilitators, is supported at a specific level, there was no additional personnel funded through these grants. Generally, other administrative and organizational support activities would be continued at the same level. Thus, the grant monies provided a large "bang for the buck" in terms of numbers of educators or facilitators trained, materials developed, or activities undertaken. This would be especially true in comparing the "cost per educator trained" through EETAP funds versus the ongoing support funds for the state coordinators.

This margin of benefit was even more strongly visible in the projects that had **collective training efforts.** Within states, the coordinators of PLT, WILD, and WET who received grants from their national coordinating offices shared training efforts and so shared training costs. These often played out with one training partner paying for the facility or meals, and another paying for

resources or some similar type of arrangement for most efficiently using funds available without duplicating efforts among the training partner coordinators.

Lessons Learned

- ***Seeding larger efforts:*** Some coordinators attempted to develop large projects with their monies and, in many cases, had to scale down their efforts. Grant monies seemed to be most effective in initiating new undertakings that had the potential to grow, but that were not necessarily completely new efforts. Pass-through grant proposals could be encouraged that suggest the monies be used for initiating a larger effort, but the funds be used for a discreet first few "steps" in the larger plan.

- ***Securing additional funds:*** There is value in using pass-through grants monies to initiate efforts to secure ongoing funding. There is never a guarantee that additional funding can be obtained, but the opportunity to have access to funds to use as a "match" or as a demonstration increases the likelihood that a good idea can obtain external funding. Such a use of funds could be encouraged in a grants program.

- ***Expanding at the margin:*** Throughout the reports, there is a subtext of "fully employed" coordinators attempting to expand their efforts without being able to expand their time. Many of the reports were able to demonstrate effective use of the grant monies to expand existing efforts. Such funding of activities and the reports can be valuable to both the funder and the recipient of the funds when the discussion is clear about the funded activities expanding programs "at the margin." Clarity in what would *not* be/have been accomplished without the additional funding, and the benefits of the funding to expand efforts with minimal cost per training or person trained would be important information for the field.

Conclusion: Overall Observations

The individual efforts by the coordinators across the three training programs in all the states are quite impressive. Many of the activities undertaken with the pass-through grants provide a sound basis for replication, expansion, and implementation much more broadly. The lessons learned for both EE programs and projects at the local, state, and national level *and* for the funders of such programs are important. These also could help inform future types of pass-through grants efforts. The following observations cut across programs and coordinators and are lessons for both those doing educator training and funders of such efforts. The five years of pass-through grants provides a rich background of insight into clarifying the process for both training programs (• below) and funders (♦ below).

1. ***Consistencies in theme:*** One of the most noticeable trends was that among the three network training partners, there were consistencies each year. For example, the first year of the projects, the monies seemed to be broadly used and several themes were introduced. The introduction of new themes in subsequent years was dramatically reduced and it would appear that the network partners were funding projects that addressed more specific foci such as correlations, addressing traditionally lesser served audiences, education-reform, and specific partnerships. The number of projects focusing on a theme was different each year, with more projects alike than disparate across the three projects. The number of projects addressing audiences not traditionally served by the states appeared stronger after Year Two than previously. The focus on correlations and other activities relating to education reform were stronger in Year Two. The ways in which the coordinators "met" the themes varied widely.

    - *Focused funding through pass-through grants is a means of obtaining greater impact on themes desired by the grantor.*

- *Educator training programs can build unique programs even when there are specified themes. All could be strengthened by forums to share approaches, products, difficulties, and outcomes.*

- *Grant applicants can be creative in the manner in which they chose to address themes when the specified theme is broad and open to multiple means by which the desired outcomes are met.*

2. ***Timing:*** An almost constant concern for coordinators was the issue of time and timing. There were comments suggesting alternative times for workshops, durations of workshops, and other time/timing solutions. A vast majority of the reports requesting extensions noted that the amount of time required to implement the activities exceeded the amount of time offered in the funding cycle. Further, several coordinators pointed out that the grant cycle was out of sync with the school year, calendar year, or state fiscal year.

   - *In planning for educator training, building adequate time into the process for planning is as important to the success of the effort as time for the implementation.*

   - *Phased implementation can help training efforts satisfy both planning and implementation demands. Phasing also allows the training to follow the timing demanded by the recipients of the training (alternative calendar cycles).*

   - *Pass-through grant programs must be allowed to have developmental time before they are expected to have results. Consideration should be given to the funding cycle and how it interacts with the project being* proposed.

3. ***Partnering:*** The time required to develop partnerships and the time necessary to build relationships with new audiences cannot be overestimated. Throughout the reports, there were comments regarding unanticipated time requirements and delays in actually creating materials or conducting workshops because of the need to create meaningful partnerships and trust before efforts could be realized. Also consistent were the observations that once developed, these relationships and projects had value that was worth the expenditure of time in creation.

   - *Partnering should be viewed by training efforts as long-term efforts, both in terms of commitment* ***and*** *in terms of development. Staging or phasing grants might help encourage slow and solid relationship creation.*

- *Pass-through grant programs should encourage structuring time into the grant for building relationships. The "product" orientation of many grant efforts is inhibited by the dependence of product on the calendar cycle.*

4. ***Awareness as Training:*** Obviously, many of the projects were designed to reach audiences with training in the programs. There were, however, funds used to reach audiences for awareness of the programs and of environmental education programs and resources.

   Many state coordinators attended, presented, and/or had displays at state education associations' annual meetings or state Department of Education conferences. Others did the same at regional organizational meetings such as National Science Teachers Association regional conferences or a Montessori Schools Association meeting. A few took awareness of their projects to the public at large: one state had a display at its State Fair.

   - *Reaching audiences in a training program does not have to focus on training. Precursors to education often include awareness. Especially when addressing new audiences, grants being used for building awareness may help ensure long-term success in reaching the desired audience for the program.*

   - In proposals, the clearer it is which activities are incorporated as "training" and the more broadly defined training is, the stronger the outcomes of the projects will be.

5. ***Cancellations:*** Uniformly, there were workshop cancellations due to low enrollment. In several of these cases, the workshops were planned for targeted audiences, sometimes in geographic locations (remote or inner-city) that are not traditional venues for the projects. Many coordinators noted that subsequent workshop attempts were successful.

   - *When building relationships with new audiences, it may take repeated attempts to reach the audience. It takes time to build trust in the provider of a program.*

   - *It is often necessary to attempt a program several times before the program is able to be completed. Perseverance may pay in bigger returns over time.*

   - *Allowing training targets to be flexible and developmental increases the likelihood for success.*

6. ***Low Cost:*** Monies were used in a variety of ways to meet some broad goals set by EETAP. The relatively small pass-through grants (averaging around $4,000) spurred innovative, aggressive, and, in most cases, successful projects. "EETAP enabled us to open the doors that will provide assistance to promote student involvement in exciting, inquiry-based, problem-solving activities."

- *Small grants projects can be a very effective tool for trying creative and innovative approaches or changes to training.*

- *Use of pass-through grants to well-established training networks seems to be a highly cost-effective means of reaching various publics.*

7. ***Use of funds:*** There were many different ways in which state projects used the pass-through funds to more effectively reach their targeted audiences. In many cases, the funds were used to pay for the project books, one of the dominant costs borne by the workshop attendee. In other projects, funds were used to pay for per diem costs of participants in the workshops, whether for a single day training or for an extended training effort, such as a camp or institute. Yet other projects used grant monies to pay for the travel of facilitators to remote locations to conduct projects, often for relatively small numbers of educators. A couple of coordinators noted that these projects were, for those regions, very successful and that without the grant monies, neither would the educators be able to attend a centralized workshop in a more populous area nor would the facilitators or the coordinators have the fiscal support to conduct a training in the remote areas.

- *Use of pass-through grants to subsidize workshops for target audiences appears to be a good motivator for attendance at workshops.*

- *Such subsidy, however, can take a variety of forms, no one of which seems to be "absolute" in its effectiveness with all groups. A project should consider the group's values, needs, and perceptions regarding what it would consider to be appropriate subsidy.*

8. ***Long-term deliverables:*** Several projects used grant monies to develop resources or pay for materials that would have long-term benefits to the state programs. Resource trunks, kits, and models were developed or compiled by several projects; these then became available for use by educators throughout their states via a loan program for certified teachers and educators. Other projects used their grants to help develop mentoring projects for their facilitators. In several cases, these were for either new or

inactive facilitators, to encourage these facilitators to conduct more educator training workshops.

A few of the grant recipients used some of the monies to build Web sites for their programs. Many used the resources of the EETAP partnership — such as the national EETAP coordinator for their project, or EE-Link or WestEd — to help create or maintain the Web pages.

Another group of projects incorporated surveys into their funded efforts. The surveys ranged from studies of current facilitators, to studies of inactive facilitators, teachers, university faculty, and nonformal educators. Most of the studies were done to help the state coordinator plan to enhance future work.

Still other projects used pass-through funds to provide resources to help active facilitators be more effective. These projects tended to focus on disposable or perishable supplies needed by the facilitators to conduct their training. In all these examples, the constant thread was to garner long-term sustainability of efforts either through enhancing human or enhancing physical resources for training delivery.

- *Pass-through grants can be effectively used to develop resources and information that will be used over a longer term than the funding cycle. The benefits of such support can be and should be noted by the applicant for funds, including information on how sustainability of the resources, when necessary, will be ensured.*

- *Encouraging grants that focus on long-term deliverables over numbers reached would increase this type of project.*

9. ***Natural Events:*** Some interesting comments offered by several coordinators related to the necessity for delay of their completion of funded activities due to nature and natural occurrences such as floods, hurricanes, fires, and other natural events. As groups working with natural resources and the environment, it would appear almost unnecessary to explain natural events as a reason for delay; but it is perhaps because the organizations are used to going forward regardless of weather that the natural events seemed to require more explanation. This "lesson" provides good advice both to potential projects and potential funders of such projects.

- *When working with environmental education organizations, the use of the environment is expected. Most workshops or training efforts occur regardless of weather, but there are severe natural events that may affect specific programs and 1) delay the implementation; and 2) draw focus away from the proposed*

program. Training groups (and funders) should anticipate the possibilities of natural events forcing changes in efforts.

10. ***Creativity:*** The innovative efforts of the pass-through grants appear to have been of tremendous value for coordinators to try things they wanted to do, but did not necessarily have adequate resources for prior to the grants. One coordinator explained "project funding allowed us to experience and experiment." An interesting corollary in the reports was the "discovery" by coordinators (through mid-year reports and feedback) that they could change their efforts if something was not working, or that they could attempt an activity and not be penalized if the activity did not succeed in the manner in which they had originally intended.

- *In funded efforts, the program can usually negotiate changes with the funder as the program proceeds. Demonstrating why the changes improve the program is necessary and the responsibility of the funded training organization.*

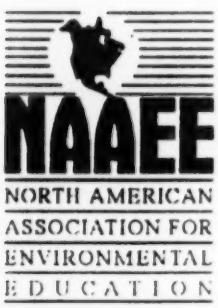
♦ *Pass-through grants can, and do, encourage creativity. Such creativity could be expanded by stating that a proposed activity may change due to unforeseen information, events, or problems.*

●♦ *If an educator training program desires true innovation, "failure" in terms of not succeeding in the proposed activities cannot exist. Rather, focusing on what is gained from an attempt that does not achieve what was intended allows for greater lessons learned to be shared with the field.*

11. ***Variety:*** As the goal of the projects was training, the grants allowed coordinators to do training in a variety of ways. "EETAP allowed us to financially support our facilitators so that they can successfully reach the teachers in the districts that need the most support."

- *There is no "best" way for all cases, all the time. Rather, variety in approaches to training that reflect local needs, issues, and goals seems to be what leads towards success.*

♦ *Pass-through grants appear to be an effective means by which a funder can achieve its desired outcomes through a wide variety of efforts done in a wide array of manners.*



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